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FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING FORCE IN CYPRUS

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General (A/50/722/Add.1) on the financing of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). During its consideration of the report, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information.

2. The Advisory Committee recalls that for the 12-month period from 1 July 1995 to 30 June 1996, the General Assembly, in resolution 49/230 of 23 December 1994, approved resources amounting to $43,472,300 gross ($42,645,700 net) for UNFICYP. The Secretary-General's current report contains the proposed budget for UNFICYP for the 12-month period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997 with expenditure for the period estimated at $44,119,200 gross ($42,072,300 net), reflecting an overall increase of 1.5 per cent in gross terms compared with the preceding 12-month period. As indicated in the summary of the Secretary-General's report, the increase of $646,900 gross results primarily from the conversion to the status of United Nations local staff of locally employed civilian staff obtained on a contractual basis. The Advisory Committee notes that the increase is also attributable to the Secretary-General's request for an additional international post at the P-3 level as well as to such items as utilities and commercial communications.

3. With regard to the format and presentation of the report, the Advisory Committee recalls the comments and recommendations made in its report in document A/50/798 in the context of its examination of the Secretary-General's note containing the mock-up budget for peace-keeping operations (A/50/319). Specifically, in paragraph 8 of document A/50/798, the Advisory Committee had stated that "although the presentation of information in the form of tables and graphs should be encouraged, these should not substitute for written

explanations". Thus, the Advisory Committee believes that table 1 of the report is unnecessary since the information has been provided in narrative form.

4. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee recommends that table 3 of the document under consideration should be omitted from future presentations. The Advisory Committee believes that attempts to apportion costs to the various items of expenditure have not been successful since it is not possible, for example, to apportion costs such as supplies and services and air and surface freight between the military and civilian components and mission support.

5. The Advisory Committee notes that while the Secretary-General's reports in documents S/1995/488 and S/1995/1020 contain extensive information with regard to UNFICYP's humanitarian functions and its cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in this respect, it is regrettable that no mention whatsoever has been included in the budget report on this aspect of UNFICYP's activities. The Advisory Committee recalls that it had been informed previously that humanitarian activities in the area were not on the scale or of the nature of the humanitarian activities associated with other recent peace-keeping operations. In UNFICYP those activities have traditionally included facilitating family reunion visits between the two communities in Cyprus, the delivery of medicines and pension cheques to communities in enclaves, supervision of medical evacuations and facilitating communications between authorities of public utilities (see A/47/1004).

6. The Advisory Committee inquired as to the administrative, organizational and resource requirements for UNFICYP's humanitarian activities and was informed that a military unit comprising from 15 to 20 personnel, including civilian local level staff, was involved in this activity. The Advisory Committee inquired and was informed that as of 4 March 1996, the total number of staff involved in UNFICYP's humanitarian activities was as follows:

UNFICYP headquarters	3 military officers 1 civilian police monitor 2 non-commissioned officers 1 local-level secretary
Sector 1 (Argentinian contingent)	2 officers 2 non-commissioned officers
Sector 2 (British contingent)	1 officer 4 non-commissioned officers
Sector 4 (Austrian contingent)	1 officer 4 non-commissioned officers

7. The Advisory Committee expects that future budget submissions will include all information pertaining to humanitarian and other such activities.

8. The Advisory Committee also recommends that the information provided in the annexes to document A/50/722/Add.1 should be much more cohesive, with a concise explanation of the increases in estimates and better narrative explanations.

For example, the narrative in annex II.E to the report should be better synchronized with the information provided in other parts of the annex. Furthermore, in parts of annex II the current inventory of assets has not been included and a proper demarcation has not been made between vehicles that are owned or rented by UNFICYP as distinguished from those that are contingent-owned.

9. The Advisory Committee recalls that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 47/236 of 14 September 1993, the costs of UNFICYP which are not covered by voluntary contributions have been assessed on Member States since 16 June 1993. Voluntary contributions equal to one third of the annual cost of UNFICYP are being made on a continuing basis by the Government of Cyprus, while the Government of Greece has pledged an annual contribution of $6.5 million. As indicated in paragraph 15 of the Secretary-General's report, total resources of $110,723,750 gross have been made available to the Force from 16 June 1993 to 31 December 1995 (including voluntary contributions of $56,945,400 from the Governments of Cyprus and Greece).

10. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 16 of the report that with regard to the status of assessed contributions for the period from 16 June 1993 to 31 December 1995, amounts totalling $50,809,617 had been assessed for UNFICYP and that contributions received as at 31 December 1995 amounted to $42,587,722. In addition, outstanding assessments were reduced by an amount of $78,203 pursuant to General Assembly resolution 50/83 of 15 December 1995, resulting in a shortfall of $8,143,692. With regard to the information indicated in paragraph 25 of the report, the Advisory Committee inquired and was informed that full reimbursement in accordance with standard rates established by the General Assembly for troop costs has been made to troop-contributing countries for the period from 16 June 1993 to 31 July 1995; it is estimated that an amount of $6.3 million is due for troop costs for the period ending 31 December 1995.

11. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 18 of the report that in response to the appeals by the Secretary-General for the financing of the Force for the period prior to June 1993, voluntary contributions totalling $6.4 million were pledged; however, of this amount, $310,500 has been paid. The Advisory Committee was informed that most of the outstanding pledges were made by either former or current troop-contributing countries to UNFICYP.

12. In this connection, the Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 20 of the report that as at 31 December 1995, the special account established for the period prior to 16 June 1993 had a cash balance of approximately $200,000, whereas obligations in respect of reimbursement to troop contributors amount to some $200 million.

13. The Advisory Committee examined in detail the Secretary-General's budget estimates for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997. The Advisory Committee recalls its comment in its report (A/50/798) in the context of its examination of the "mock-up" budget that the document should provide information on budget performance for previous periods and the latest available financial data for the period in progress. The financial performance for the period from 1 January to 30 June 1995 was contained in the Secretary-General's report (A/50/722 and Corr.1); information was not included in respect of the period in

progress. On inquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the initial financial performance report for the period from 1 July to 31 December 1995 showed that the amount appropriated for the period would be fully utilized with an additional requirement for the overexpenditure of $333,000 gross ($344,800 net) which was carried over from the period 1 January to 30 June 1995.

14. As mentioned in paragraph 2 above the increase in the budget estimates is primarily owing to the conversion of 318 local level staff and a request for an additional post at the P-3 level. As indicated in table 4 of the Secretary-General's report (A/50/722/Add.1) there are currently 9 international posts at the Professional level and above, in addition to 27 Field Service posts. As indicated in annex IV to the Secretary-General's report, five of the Field Service posts are listed against support services. On inquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Field Service staff perform supervisory services in such functions as vehicle mechanic, workshop supervisor, generator mechanic and electrician. The Advisory Committee believes that some of the functions of the Field Service posts could either be combined or performed by locally recruited personnel.

15. Having considered the job description relating to the additional P-3 international post requested and the additional information provided by the representatives of the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee is not convinced that the functions envisaged for the P-3 post cannot be combined with one of the existing posts. As such, the Advisory Committee recommends that the staffing resources be reorganized to accommodate the functions described in annex V to the Secretary-General's report.

16. The Advisory Committee notes that there is an increase in local staff salaries and common staff costs indicated in annex I to the Secretary-General's report, offset by a corresponding decrease in contractual services. These estimates relate to the conversion as of 1 July 1995 of the locally employed civilians who had been provided by the British Forces in Cyprus from 11 December 1974 to 30 June 1995 by means of a letter of assist.

17. The Advisory Committee recalls that it was informed that the locally employed civilians were employed by the Civilian Establishment and Pay Office of the British Forces in Cyprus and were under a labour contract, subject to the Office's regulations and conditions of employment, which included entitlement to terminal benefits, including gratuity and indemnity payments. Under their terms of employment, the locally employed civilians were also entitled to an end-of-year bonus (equivalent to one month's salary) and reimbursement of travel costs in connection with carrying out their duties in the buffer zone. All administrative costs, including salaries, incurred by the Civilian Establishment and Pay Office in providing this personnel (except for the charges incurred by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) were charged to UNFICYP by the United Kingdom Government through the regular logistics support billings together with the applicable administrative fee (see A/50/802, paras. 37-39).

18. The Advisory Committee was further informed that during the period that UNFICYP was funded from voluntary contributions, some of the locally employed civilians were either fully funded by the United Kingdom, financing for others

was cost-shared (70 per cent United Kingdom, 30 per cent United Nations) while others were fully funded by the United Nations.

19. With regard to the question of liability for terminal benefits for the locally employed civilians (A/50/802, para. 40), there are two issues involved; the first relates to the responsibility the United Nations may have for the termination benefits of those contractual personnel who have not been taken over by the United Nations as local staff; the second relates to the recognition of prior service for those who have been taken over. The Advisory Committee understands that these matters are under review and that related costs would be reflected in the next performance report and/or in future budgets; in this connection, the Advisory Committee expects that any presentations of costs will be accompanied by a full explanation of the arrangements entered into by the United Nations.

20. The Advisory Committee notes the increases in the estimates for such items as utilities (from $793,700 to $1,174,600) and commercial communications (from $359,200 to $383,300) over the previous period. The Advisory Committee is concerned at this trend and trusts that greater control over these items will be exercised and the situation will be closely monitored.

21. On inquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that of the 343 vehicles listed in annex II.D to the report, 145 were rental vehicles, 56 were United Nations owned and 142 were contingent owned. The Advisory Committee notes from annex I to the report, however, that there is an increase in estimates for rental of vehicles and related costs from $1,656,300 for the previous 12-month period to $1,767,000 for the period under consideration. The Advisory Committee expects that expenditure in this regard will be closely monitored and kept under control. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee questions the basis for ratios for use of vehicles as indicated in annex II.B to the report, as they appear to be arbitrary.

22. With regard to air operations, the Advisory Committee notes that the "Argentinian contingent will provide required air support through the use of two Hughes H-500 D/369M light observation helicopters, with night flying and observation capability, at the hire rate of approximately $900 per flight hour for 1,080 hours, inclusive of spare parts and maintenance" (annex II.E, para. 6). The Advisory Committee also notes from annex I of the report that estimates for air operations have increased from $986,800 for the period from 1 July 1995 to 30 June 1996, to $1,011,200 for the period under consideration. On inquiry the Advisory Committee was informed that the increase in estimates over the previous budget period was owing to the fact that the helicopters being used for the period under consideration provided night flying and observation capability. The Advisory Committee was also informed that expenditure for this item, prior to the contract with the Argentinian Government, amounted to $1,182,500 for the six and a half-month period from 16 June to 13 December 1994 (A/49/590).

23. The Advisory Committee inquired as to what the estimates for internal audit entailed. The Advisory Committee was informed that the estimates included the travel and subsistence allowance for two auditors for a total of 20 days each in Cyprus to undertake a comprehensive audit of the UNFICYP accounts, with

particular emphasis on procurement, personnel, communications, transport and air operations as well as follow-up of prior audit recommendations.

24. The Advisory Committee points out that the usual provision for payment to the support account has not been included in the Secretary-General's report. The Advisory Committee notes that the Secretary-General is proposing a new funding mechanism in his report in document A/50/876). The Advisory Committee was informed that had provision been included in this budget, it would have amounted to $853,600.

25. Taking into account its observations and recommendations in the paragraphs above, the Advisory Committee is of the opinion that the cost of UNFICYP should not exceed $44,013,600 gross for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997. The Advisory Committee also recommends the appropriation of the amount of $23,519,000 gross ($21,489,100 net), representing two thirds of the authorized cost of the maintenance of the Force for the 12-month period beginning on 1 July 1996, to be assessed at the monthly rate of $1,959,917 gross ($1,790,758 net), subject to the extension(s) of the Force by the Security Council.

26. The Advisory Committee also recommends approval for UNFICYP, on an exceptional basis, the special arrangements with regard to the application of article IV of the Financial Regulations of the United Nations, whereby appropriations required in respect of obligations owed to Governments providing contingents and/or logistic support to UNFICYP shall be retained beyond the period stipulated under financial regulations 4.3 and 4.4.

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FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN GEORGIA

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General (A/50/731/Add.1) on the financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) during the 12-month period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997. During its consideration of the report, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information.

2. UNOMIG was established by the Security Council in its resolution 858 (1993) of 24 August 1993 for an initial period of six months. The mandate of UNOMIG has been revised and extended by the Security Council in subsequent resolutions, the latest of which, resolution 1036 (1996) of 12 January 1996, extended the mandate from 13 January 1996 until 12 July 1996.

3. The report of the Secretary-General on the financing of UNOMIG (A/50/731/Add.1) is the first submission to be reviewed by the Advisory Committee that was prepared on the basis of a new format of budget submissions for peace-keeping operations, and to a large extent it reflects the comments and observations made by the Advisory Committee in the course of its consideration of the mock-up budget for a single peace-keeping operation (A/50/319). The Advisory Committee notes and welcomes several improvements in the format of the budget submission for the financing of UNOMIG, compared with the format of the mock-up budget. For example, annex III.C to the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of UNOMIG, which contains the monthly breakdown of resources, is much more concise than the corresponding annex in the mock-up budget. At the same time the Advisory Committee believes that the format of peace-keeping budgets should be further improved and rationalized. The specific comments and observations of the Advisory Committee that address the question of budget format of peace-keeping operations are contained in several paragraphs below.

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4. In parts II and III of his report (A/50/731/Add.1), the Secretary-General describes the political mandate of UNOMIG, as approved by the Security Council in its resolution 937 (1994), and the operational plan and requirements that derive from the political mandate. As reflected in paragraph 4 of the report of the Secretary-General, the current mandate of UNOMIG provides for an authorized strength of 135 military observers and a Chief Military Observer. The development of the military strength authorized by the Security Council is reflected in annex I to the report.

5. Paragraphs 16 to 21 of the report contain a description of special programmes implemented by UNOMIG, i.e., humanitarian assistance and promotion of human rights. The Advisory Committee points out that the report does not contain any information on resource requirements relating to the implementation by UNOMIG of the special programmes, nor does it provide a description of the existing mechanism of coordinating these activities among UNOMIG and United Nations agencies and programmes. Upon inquiring, the Advisory Committee was informed that UNOMIG did not provide any staff, vehicles, equipment or communication facilities to any of the specialized programmes operating in Georgia. The Advisory Committee recommends that concise information on resource requirements relating to the implementation by UNOMIG of special programmes, as well as a description of the existing mechanism of coordinating such activities, be included in the next budget submission for the financing of UNOMIG.

6. Section IV, "Financial administration", of the report contains information on the financial period (part A), resources made available and operating costs for the period from 7 August 1993 to 30 June 1996 (part B), status of assessed contributions (part C) and voluntary contributions (part D). The Advisory Committee points out that table 1 in part B represents, essentially, a summary of annex VI of the same document. The Advisory Committee sees no reason for maintaining similar information in two parts of the budget submission and it recommends, therefore, that such information be consolidated and reflected in a single table of future budget submissions for peace-keeping operations.

7. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraphs 25 to 28 of the report that voluntary contributions have been made or pledged in support of activities of UNOMIG. The proposed budget does not include, however, a provision for UNOMIG activities to be funded from voluntary contributions. Therefore, in accordance with the current budget methodology, the proposed budget for UNOMIG cannot be regarded as estimates reflecting the full cost of the Mission. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon inquiry, that at the time of budget preparation, the value of in-kind voluntary contribution (an aircraft) from the Government of Switzerland had not yet been determined. In the absence of information in this regard, the Advisory Committee believes that the Standard Cost Manual could be used to determine the estimated value of in-kind contributions. The Advisory Committee recommends that efforts be made to apply consistently the methodology of preparing the budgets of peace-keeping operations on a full cost basis. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee recalls and reiterates its recommendation in paragraph 46 of its report in document A/49/664 that "the Secretary-General should develop an improved presentation of voluntary contributions and a description and cost estimates of activities financed from voluntary contributions and other sources".

8. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 30 of document A/50/731/Add.1 that the status of the UNOMIG agreement between the Government of Georgia and the United Nations became effective on 15 October 1994. The Advisory Committee recommends that the next budget submission for UNOMIG include information on the estimated value of any contribution to the Mission under the status of the UNOMIG agreement.

9. In section VII of his report, the Secretary-General estimates the cost of UNOMIG for the 12-month period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997 at $17,115,300 gross ($15,995,400 net). Supplementary information on the cost estimates is provided in annexes II, III and V to document A/50/731/Add.1.

10. As indicated in the executive summary of the report of the Secretary-General, the cost estimate of $17.1 million gross provides for a strength of 135 military observers and 139 civilian staff (64 international and 75 local) and reflects "a moderate increase over the prior period". The explanation of major changes in the cost estimates from the prior period is contained in paragraphs 37 to 39 of the report.

11. As reflected in paragraph 36 of the report, some 58 per cent of the total estimate of $17.1 million is based on standard cost ratios and costs contained in the Standard Ratio/Cost Manual, while 42 per cent of the estimates reflects mission specific requirements. The Advisory Committee points out that the Manual was not provided to the Advisory Committee when it started reviewing the budget submission for UNOMIG. The Advisory Committee trusts that, in the future, the Manual will be provided to the Advisory Committee on time. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee recommends that explanations of mission specific requirements, which are currently reflected in the right column of annex III.A, be presented in a more transparent format, possibly as a footnote, especially when the text is too long for the column space of the table.

12. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 37 of the report that a provision for civilian staff costs reflects the elimination of the 10 per cent turnover factor "as the Mission is expected to be fully deployed during this period". The Advisory Committee was informed, upon inquiry, that the current vacancy rate in the Mission is approximately 10 per cent. The Advisory Committee was also informed that the Mission had in the past a vacancy rate of about 10 per cent. In these circumstances the Advisory Committee believes that 5 per cent of the turnover factor, rather than zero, would be a more realistic assumption for estimating civilian staff costs of the Mission. The consequential reduction in the cost estimates would be $417,800.

13. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 38 of the report that although the total number of civilian staff is the same as for the prior period, the proposed staffing table reflects a substitution of one P-3 and one P-2 posts for one P-4 and one P-3 posts, respectively. Annex V to the report provides a breakdown of the current and proposed staffing table by organizational units. The Advisory Committee has no objection to the proposed changes in the staffing table for UNOMIG; however, these changes should have been explained in the text of the report of the Secretary-General.

14. As indicated in footnote e/ to annex III.C to the report, a hazardous duty station allowance of $902.05 per person per month is budgeted for international staff and an equivalent of 20 per cent of their annual salary is budgeted for this for local staff. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon inquiry, that the current rates of hazardous duty station allowance for international staff, which are in effect as of 1 March 1995, reflect an increase compared with the previous level of $867 per person per month. The Advisory Committee also notes from annex III.A to the report that salaries of local staff were increased effective 1 June 1995, which would result in a corresponding increase in hazardous duty station allowance. The Advisory Committee points out that any changes in staff entitlements and allowances should have been explained in detail and it recommends that this should be done in all future budget submissions for peace-keeping operations. The Advisory Committee also recalls and reiterates its observation in paragraph 22 of its report contained in document A/48/900 that any payment relating to hazardous duty station allowance should be made in accordance with the relevant rules and regulations of the United Nations.

15. Annex II to document A/50/731/Add.1 provides a breakdown of the cost estimates for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997 by object line and by recurrent and non-recurrent costs. The Advisory Committee believes that for comparison purposes the budget figures for the previous period reflected in the annex should have also been broken by recurrent and non-recurrent items. The Advisory Committee recommends that this should be done in future budget submissions for peace-keeping operations.

16. The Advisory Committee notes that the budget submission for UNOMIG does not contain an explanation of significant increases in requirements for several objects of expenditure, e.g., travel of staff, rental of premises, maintenance supplies, spare parts, repairs and maintenance, petrol, oil and lubricants, etc. The Advisory Committee recommends that significant deviations (10 per cent and more) from previous budget requirements be explained and justified in the budget submissions for peace-keeping operations.

17. The Advisory Committee raised several questions and made the following comments and observations with regard to information contained in annex III.E to document A/50/731/Add.1:

(a) Rations. The Advisory Committee was informed, on inquiry, that a recurrent provision of $42,000 was estimated on the basis of requirements for ration packs for 200 persons during 30 days at a cost of $7 per pack; the rations are to be held in reserve for emergency use by the Mission. The Advisory Committee believes that to provide emergency food rations for a contingent of 200 people during the whole period of 30 days might not be the most efficient solution in an emergency situation. The Advisory Committee requests, therefore, that the Secretary-General review this matter and take necessary measures with a view to reducing the cost of rations;

(b) Official travel. In response to its query as to why no provision was made for an internal audit, the Advisory Committee was informed that at the time of the budget preparation, information on an internal audit had not been made available. It is now envisaged, however, that an internal audit will take

place during the first half of 1997 and the related travel cost, estimated at $4,800, will be accommodated from the overall proposed provision of $140,000 for travel of staff. The Advisory Committee was also informed that a provision of $45,100 had been made for an external audit, which was planned for October/November 1996;

(c) Purchase of vehicles. The Advisory Committee notes that four new vehicles are proposed for purchase for the Office of the Deputy Special Envoy, the proposed staffing table of which provides for five staff in the Professional category and above. The Advisory Committee is not convinced that this ratio is justified. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee does not believe that heavy terrain vehicles, such as jeep 4 x 4s, should be replaced at an average mileage of about 60,000 miles (98,000 kilometres). The Advisory Committee inquired whether it was possible to transfer vehicles from other peace-keeping operations or from the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi. The Advisory Committee was informed that at the time of the preparation of the budget submission for UNOMIG no such vehicles were available, with the exception of one heavy sedan from ex-United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), should the Mission wind down and the equipment be released from the country. In view of the above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the need for vehicles in UNOMIG be reviewed once again, taking into account, inter alia, the most recent developments in peace-keeping operations and their future requirements and that in future the need be met mostly, when possible and economically feasible, through the transfer from other peace-keeping missions, or from the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi;

(d) Miscellaneous other services. The proposed provision of $120,000 reflects a growth of $21,400 compared with the previous budget of $98,600 and includes an estimated cost of $108,000 for bank charges calculated as 1.5 per cent of the average estimated monthly remittance of $600,000. The Advisory Committee was informed that the provision for bank charges would cover the monthly cost of a courier service for the delivery of cash ($5,000) and the monthly cost of insurance of the shipment of banknotes ($4,000). In addition, as reflected in paragraph 2 of annex III to the report, the lack of adequate banking facilities in the area of operation necessitated the inclusion of a provision of $42,000 under official travel for travel of staff for banking and procurement transactions. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 42 of the report that "efforts are ongoing to develop more secure and cost-effective payment mechanisms, including a reduction in the number and value of transactions that are effected in cash". The Advisory Committee welcomes these efforts and trusts that their results will be reflected in the next report of the Secretary-General on the financing of UNOMIG. The Advisory Committee was informed that the bulk of requirements in cash related primarily to the payment of monthly subsistence allowance. Although the Advisory Committee was informed that operational procedures were in place to ensure physical safety of cash, it would welcome all efforts that could contribute to a better cash management and to a reduction in cash dependence. In this connection, the Advisory Committee would welcome efforts of the Secretary-General to explore, within the framework of existing United Nations rules and procedures, ways and means of paying monthly subsistence allowance in forms that could reduce the need for cash. In the meantime, the Advisory Committee recommends that the proposed provision for

miscellaneous services be approved at the previously budgeted level, i.e., $98,600;

(e) Public information. The Advisory Committee was informed during its deliberations that the public information activities of UNOMIG were not limited to distribution of printed material, as indicated in the budget submission. Upon inquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Head of Mission had established two teams, one at Sukhumi and the other at Tbilisi, comprising a political affairs/information officer, a military information officer, local information consultants and local interpreters, to monitor on a daily basis, translate and analyse the information gathered for the preparation of daily situation reports, reports of the Security Council and a press digest. The equipment purchased - televisions, shortwave radios, video cassette recorders and tape recorders - were used for the information gathering/analysing activity. The Advisory Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will ensure that the public information activities of UNOMIG remain within the mandate authorized by the Security Council and that the next budget submission for UNOMIG will reflect a full and detailed description of such activities.

18. The Advisory Committee points out that the usual provision has not been included for payment to the support account. The Advisory Committee notes that the Secretary-General is proposing a new funding mechanism for the support account for peace-keeping operations in his report in document A/50/876. The Advisory Committee was informed that had the support account provision been included in the budget submission for UNOMIG, it would have amounted to $657,700.

19. In paragraph 43 of document A/50/731/Add.1, the Secretary-General outlines the actions that appear needed to be taken by the General Assembly at its resumed fiftieth session in connection with the financing of UNOMIG. The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Secretary-General's proposal that the General Assembly appropriate an amount of $7,606,650 gross for the period from 13 January to 30 June 1996, already authorized and assessed under the terms of General Assembly resolution 49/231 B of 12 July 1995 and decision 50/449 of 22 December 1995. Furthermore, in the view of its recommendations and observations in paragraphs 12 and 17 (d) above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the Assembly appropriate an amount of $16,676,100 gross for the maintenance of UNOMIG during the 12-month period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997, to be assessed at a monthly rate of $1,389,670 gross, subject to the extension of the Mission by the Security Council.